



State of California

LITTLE HOOVER COMMISSION

March 7, 2005

The Honorable Wilma Chan
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 6005
Sacramento, CA 95814

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James P. Mayer
Executive Director

RE: SUPPORT FOR ASSEMBLY BILL 392

Dear Assemblymember Chan:

The Little Hoover Commission supports AB 392, the measure you have authored that would expand authority to all counties to implement a program for integrated health and human services. The Commission supports this measure based on findings and recommendations in its May 2004 report, *Real Lives, Real Reforms: Improving Health and Human Services*.

The Commission examined how the state organizes, funds and administers programs tied to the health and well-being of California's children, adults and families. It found that the responsibility for providing services rests with multiple levels of government and different departments within each level of government.

It also found that California spends upwards of \$60 billion a year in state and federal money on the programs, yet essential needs are not being met. A majority of clients have multiple, often-interrelated needs tied to poverty, poor overall health or unemployment. Eligibility rules change from program to program. And families must endure duplicate assessments, long waiting lists, as well as program requirements that conflict.

The Commission recommended California transition to a strong county-based system of care for providing health and human services – start with willing and capable counties, refine their efforts and rollout statewide. It recommended the Health and Human Services Agency provide technical assistance, consultation, support and regulatory relief to address any and all barriers that limit opportunities to develop an integrated system of care.

The program described in AB 392 mirrors a successful pilot program implemented by several California counties, which requires development of a strategic plan that identifies the target population to be served, programs to be included, and funding sources to be blended. AB 392 would expand that authority to the remaining counties. Because AB 392 addresses the Commission's recommendation for providing multiple services through an integrated coordinated service plan, it is taking an active support position on the measure.

As the bill moves through the committee process, I will be writing letters on behalf of the Commission to legislators urging aye votes. If you feel my presence and testimony at a hearing would be helpful, please let me know, and I will make every attempt to be available.

Sincerely,

James P. Mayer
Executive Director

c: Commissioners